



Lake Chesdin 2008

Located on the Chesterfield-Dinwiddie border, Lake Chesdin is a 3,100-acre water supply reservoir that is administered by the Appomattox River Water Authority. Lake Chesdin is a productive lake that provides numerous angling opportunities for Virginia's anglers. The lake has traditionally been known for its largemouth bass, crappie (mostly black crappie), and channel catfish fisheries. To provide additional angling opportunities, the lake is stocked annually with walleye and striped bass. In 2007, the fish community of Lake Chesdin was sampled by boat electrofishing (June) and gillnets (November and December). This report summarizes the results of these surveys and what anglers can expect to catch in Lake Chesdin.

Lake Chesdin contains a diverse fish community with a combined 25 different fish species collected in electrofishing and gillnet surveys (Table 1). Bluegill, gizzard shad and largemouth bass were the most abundant species collected in the spring electrofishing survey while white perch, gizzard shad, channel catfish, and black crappie were the most abundant species collected in the fall gillnets (Table 1).

The 2007 spring electrofishing survey was conducted later than in previous years, and after the peak largemouth bass spawning period, making it more difficult to catch adult bass (bass > 8 inches). Even with the latter sampling period, electrofishing results indicate that Lake Chesdin continues to produce a good largemouth bass fishery. The largemouth bass catch rate was about average when compared to catch rates from the 2005 and 2006 surveys. Stock density estimates indicate that the largemouth bass population is very balanced with good proportions of young bass as well as bass in the 12-19 inch range (Figure 1). Larger fish (≥ 20 inches) were somewhat rare in the collection, but again this is most likely due to sampling biases associated with the latter sampling period. The largest largemouth collected was 21 inches and weighed approximately 5 lbs. Adult bass collected were in great condition and remain some of the plumpest bass in the state. Additionally, a high number of juvenile (young-of-the-year) largemouth bass were collected suggesting that largemouth bass had a good spawn in 2007. In the next few years, Lake Chesdin's largemouth bass anglers should experience good fishing success for small to moderate-sized bass (6-19 inches) with the chance to catch that occasional trophy bass (≥ 20 inches).

Lake Chesdin continues to offer a good panfish fishery in terms of numbers of fish and species available to anglers. Catch rates for bluegill, black crappie, and white perch were extremely high, while catch rates for redear sunfish (shellcrackers) were about average (Table 1). Anglers targeting panfish should experience great fishing success especially for smaller-sized individuals. The majority of bluegill, redear sunfish, and white perch collected were less than 8 inches with the occasional redear and white perch over 9 inches (Figures 2 and 3). The majority

of crappie collected (97 %) were smaller sized (< 10 inches), but there are a limited number of crappie in the 11-16 inch range available to anglers (Figure 3). Additionally, black crappie collected were relatively skinny and their populations, combined with bluegill and white perch, could most likely benefit from some angler harvest of the smaller individuals. Also available to anglers are sparse populations of green sunfish, pumpkinseed sunfish, warmouth, and yellow perch.

Striped bass and walleye continue to be stocked annually in Lake Chesdin. Striped bass populations remain low in Lake Chesdin; however the majority of striped bass collected were quality sized or larger (≥ 20 inches). The lake even produces a few striped bass in excess of 30 inches. The largest striped bass collected was 32 inches and weighed just over 15 lbs. Similar to striped bass, the walleye catch rate was very low. Over the past few years, hatchery production constraints have limited the number of walleye available to stock in Lake Chesdin. The low stocking rates have somewhat limited the expansion of the Lake Chesdin walleye population; however the lake is scheduled to receive an increased stocking rate in 2008. The increased fingerling walleye should translate into increased walleye fishing success for anglers over the following years. Anglers fishing for walleye and striped bass should try trolling live or artificial bait across main lake points and flats in the lower half of the lake (below Whippernock Creek). Another option is to try fishing the spring spawning runs of each species in the Appomattox River.

Lake Chesdin continues to produce excellent catfish populations. Gillnet catch rates were very high for channel and white catfish, and the lake offers numerous channels in the 3-10 lb range. Most of the white catfish are small (< 3lbs), but can offer a fun fight for the younger anglers. Anglers can catch catfish throughout the lake but should concentrate fishing efforts near structure (channel drop-offs, points, or submerged debris). Chicken livers, night crawlers, and stink baits work well for both species.

For more information on Lake Chesdin, please contact:

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Table 1. Species account and catch rates for fish collected throughout Lake Chesdin in 2007

Common Name	Scientific Name	Electrofishing Catch Rates (fish/hour)	Gillnet Catch Rates (fish/net-night)
American Eel	<i>Anguilla rostrata</i>	0.70	---
Black Crappie	<i>Pomoxis nigromaculatus</i>	0.94	9.74
Blue catfish	<i>Ictalurus furcatus</i>	---	0.06
Bluegill	<i>Lepomis macrochirus</i>	165.04	0.87
Brown Bullhead	<i>Ameiurus nebulosus</i>	0.94	1.10
Chain Pickerel	<i>Esox niger</i>	1.64	0.13
Channel Catfish	<i>Ictalurus punctatus</i>	1.41	10.45
Common Carp	<i>Cyprinus carpio</i>	2.11	---
Gizzard Shad	<i>Dorosoma cepedianum</i>	116.68	15.16
Golden Shiner	<i>Notemigonus crysoleucas</i>	3.99	0.39
Green Sunfish	<i>Lepomis cyanellus</i>	0.47	---
Largemouth Bass	<i>Micropterus salmoides</i>	47.42	---
Pumkinseed	<i>Lepomis gibbosus</i>	6.81	---
Quillback	<i>Carpodes cyprinus</i>	0.47	1.58
Redear Sunfish	<i>Lepomis microlophus</i>	17.14	---
Satinfin Shiner	<i>Cyprinella analostana</i>	0.23	---
Shorthead Redhorse	<i>Moxostoma macrolepidotum</i>	1.64	1.29
Striped Bass	<i>Morone saxatilis</i>	---	0.52
Walleye	<i>Stizostedion vitreum</i>	---	0.45
Warmouth	<i>Lepomis gulosus</i>	0.94	0.06
White Catfish	<i>Ameiurus catus</i>	4.93	6.26
White Perch	<i>Morone americana</i>	1.64	20.23
White sucker	<i>Catostomus commersoni</i>	---	0.03
Yellow Bullhead	<i>Ameiurus natalis</i>	0.23	0.52
Yellow Perch	<i>Perca flavescens</i>	11.74	0.13

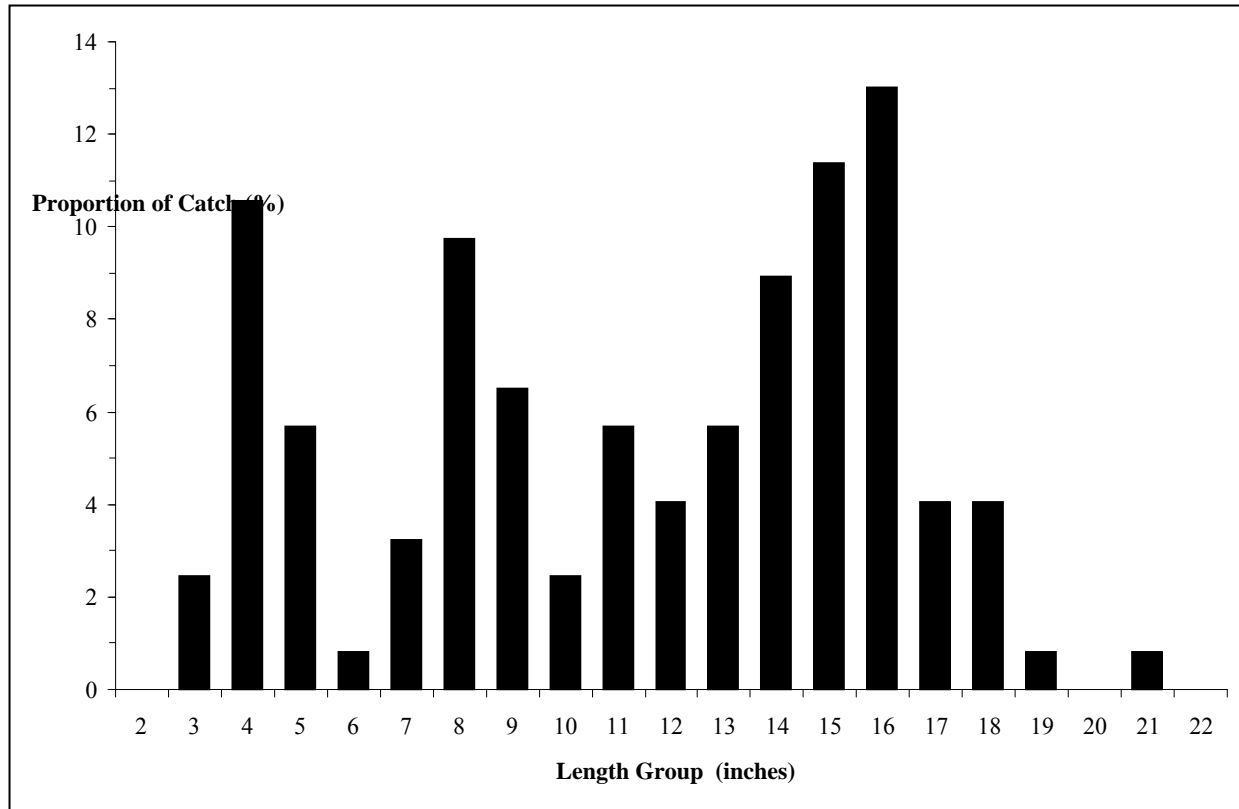


Figure 1. Length distribution of largemouth bass collected in Lake Chesdin during June, 2007.

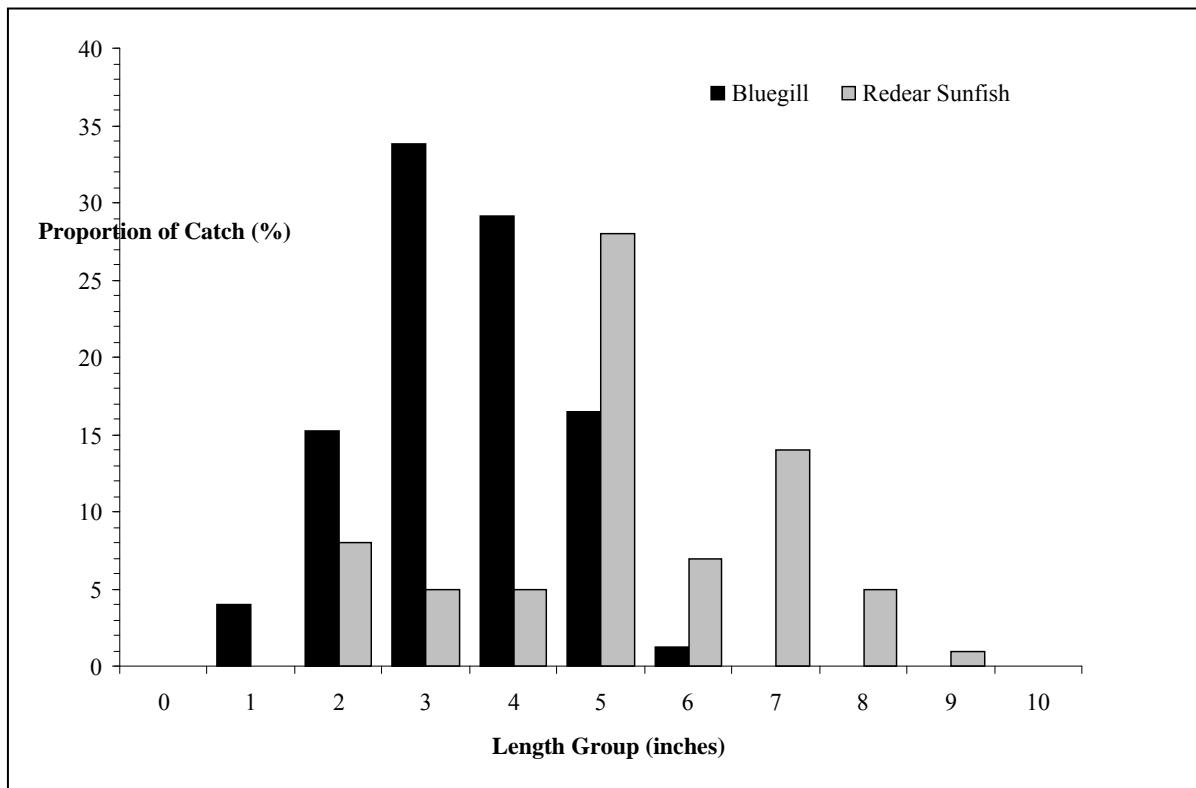


Figure 2. Length distribution of panfish collected in Lake Chesdin during June, 2007.

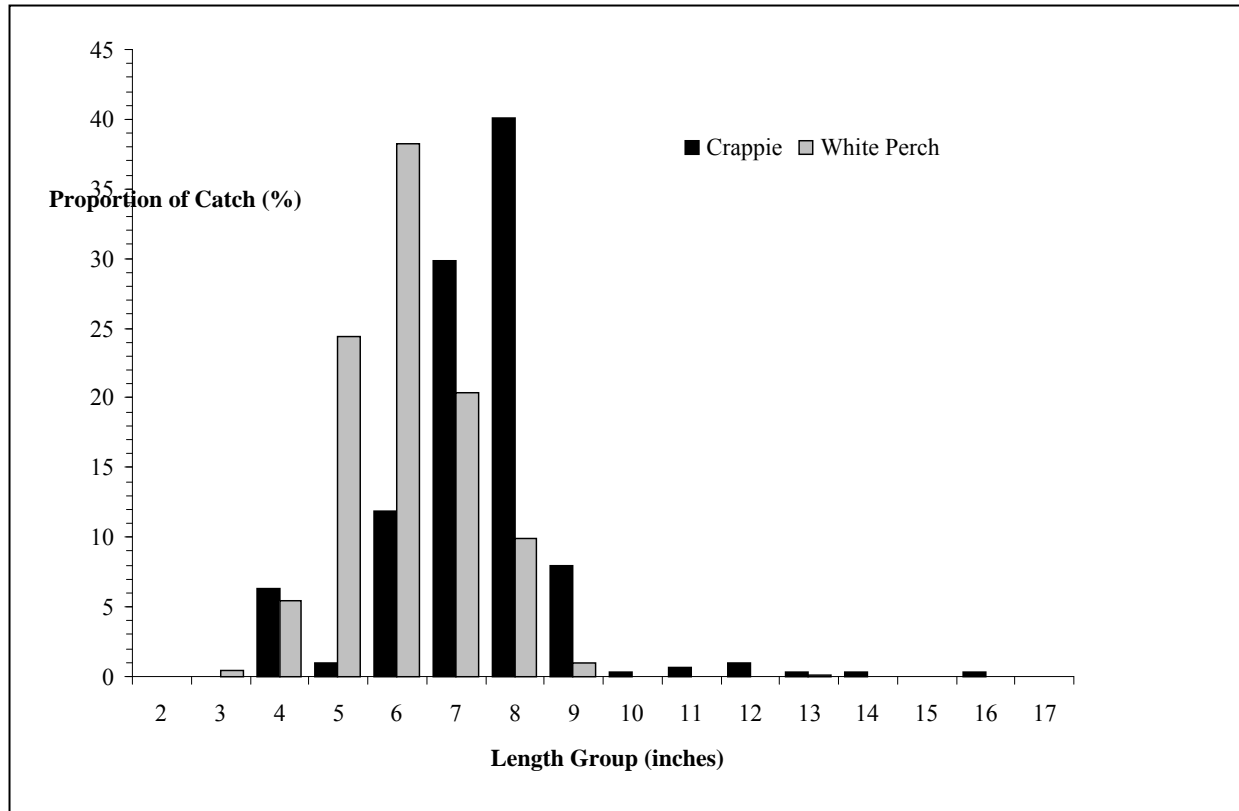


Figure 3. Length distribution of panfish collected in Lake Chesdin during November and December, 2007.